



# Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



## INDIA'S PROXIMITY ARCHIVES

August 27, 2025

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**Delhi Policy Group**

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### ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group (DPG) is among India's oldest think tanks with its primary focus on strategic and international issues of critical national interest. DPG is a non-partisan institution and is independently funded by a non-profit Trust. Over past decades, DPG has established itself in both domestic and international circles and is widely recognised today among the top security think tanks of India and of Asia's major powers.

Since 2016, in keeping with India's increasing global profile, DPG has expanded its focus areas to include India's regional and global role and its policies in the Indo-Pacific. In a realist environment, DPG remains mindful of the need to align India's ambitions with matching strategies and capabilities, from diplomatic initiatives to security policy and military modernisation.

At a time of disruptive change in the global order, DPG aims to deliver research based, relevant, reliable and realist policy perspectives to an actively engaged public, both at home and abroad. DPG is deeply committed to the growth of India's national power and purpose, the security and prosperity of the people of India and India's contributions to the global public good. We remain firmly anchored within these foundational principles which have defined DPG since its inception.

### India's Proximity Archives

India's Proximity Archives covers major developments in South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia, Central Asia and Indian Ocean Region of strategic relevance to India, compiled from open-source media. The research team includes Shreyas Deshmukh, Sanket Joshi, Jayantika Rao T.V, Divya Rai and Arshiya Chaturvedi, Research Associates. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Sanket Joshi at [sanket@dpg.org.in](mailto:sanket@dpg.org.in).

### Cover Images:

**South Asia:** Sixth China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Dialogue was held in Kabul, Afghanistan on August 20, 2025. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)

**East Asia:** President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan had a cordial meeting with Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni and Queen Mother Norodom Monineath Sihanouk at Zhongnanhai, on August 26, 2025. Source: [MOFA PRC](#)

**Central Asia:** President of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev welcomed King Abdullah II bin Al-Hussein of Jordan at the international airport in the capital, Astana, on August 26, 2025. Source: [Akorda](#)

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## Watch Points

◇ <i>Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Japan from August 29-30, 2025</i>
◇ <i>SCO Heads of State summit in Tianjin, China, from August 31 to September 1, 2025</i>
◇ <i>Modi to meet Xi on sidelines of SCO summit, 31 Aug-1 Sep, 2025</i>

## South Asia

by

Shreyas Deshmukh

The [Sixth Trilateral](#) Foreign Ministers' Dialogue between China, Afghanistan, and Pakistan took place in Kabul on August 20. In a meeting with [Taliban's counterpart](#) Muttaqi, Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar voiced his dissatisfaction regarding the Taliban's counter-terrorism initiatives against TTP. Wang Yi indicated China's willingness to promote this trilateral relationship, offering support to Afghanistan and Pakistan for improved their bilateral relations. The Taliban Foreign Ministry stated that Beijing expressed interest in exploring and mining minerals in Afghanistan and sought Kabul's [formal participation in](#) its Belt and Road Initiative. Following his arrival from Kabul on August 21st, Wang Yi attended the [Sixth Round](#) of the China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in Islamabad, where he affirmed that China would continue to give precedence to Pakistan within its neighbourhood diplomacy and was prepared to develop an advanced iteration of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

*Given the Taliban's assumption of power in Afghanistan and the deterioration of relations with Pakistan - developments viewed with concern in Beijing, which considers both nations vital to its regional policy - there has been a notable increase in trilateral diplomacy over the past two years.*

On August 23-24, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar [made an official visit](#) to Dhaka, during which he had discussions with Touhid Hossain, the Foreign Affairs Advisor of Bangladesh, and also met with Chief Advisor, Professor Muhammad Yunus. He also met with the Commerce Adviser, as well as delegations from BNP, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami, and NCP. The visit culminated in the signing of six agreements and MoUs, including visa abolition for diplomatic and official passport holders and the establishment of a joint working group on trade. Regarding the [unresolved issues](#) from 1971, including an apology for the genocide to Bangladesh, Ishaq Dar stated that they had already been settled, but [Touhid Hossain](#) expressed disagreement.

*Regime change in Bangladesh has provided an opportunity for Pakistan to reduce its regional isolation. Simultaneously, the Interim Government of Bangladesh has initiated diplomatic relations with Pakistan, citing its commitment to a policy of balanced foreign relations. The swift improvement in relations between both nations is predicated upon a tenuous foundation, considering their limited [shared interests](#).*

The Nepalese government sent two separate [diplomatic notes](#) to India and China on August 21st, addressing their recent consensus to resume the trade route via Lipulekh Pass. Nepal considers Lipulekh, a trijunction of borders, is part of their territory. During the 24th round of the Special Representatives' dialogue on the India-China boundary on August 19, both parties concurred to reopen the three traditional border trading routes, one of which traverses the Lipulekh Pass. Concerns regarding the India-China agreement were also raised by leaders of all [political parties](#) in Nepal. In a statement, the [Indian Ministry of External Affairs](#) affirmed that trade across the India-China border through Lipulekh Pass, which began in 1954 and continued for many years, was interrupted by Covid-19 and other factors, and that both countries have now consented to its resumption.

*The renewed focus on the Lipulekh pass, shortly following the Indian Foreign Secretary's visit to Nepal to prepare for Prime Minister Oli's upcoming visit to India, could undermine recent progress in border discussions and potentially generate internal political pressure in both nations.*

## Other Developments

[Afghanistan Faces Sharp Rise in Child Malnutrition, Needs \\$539 Million for Aid: WFP](#)

[Bangladesh Army chief Waker-Uz-Zaman visited China from August 21-24](#)

[Former Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe, arrested for misusing government funds, has been released on bail](#)

## Southeast Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

On [August 26](#), Chinese President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan met with Cambodian King Norodom Sihamoni and Queen Mother Norodom Monineath Sihanouk in Beijing on the sidelines of the 80th Anniversary of the Victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. During the meeting, [President Xi stated](#), "China-Cambodia relations have withstood the test of the shifting international landscape, and the two countries have forged an ironclad friendship featuring mutual assistance in trying times. The relationship has become a valuable asset for the two peoples and should be held dear by both sides".

*While no new agreements were signed as the King of Cambodia has only ceremonial powers, China's declaration of an "iron-clad friendship" with Cambodia has a huge impact on Thailand as it could potentially affect Thailand's strategic interests especially owing to the ongoing border dispute between Thailand and Cambodia. Strengthened China-Cambodia ties may tilt regional influence and impact Thailand's own leverage*

On [August 25](#), Indonesia and the United States launched the annual "Super Garuda Shield" with participation from 12 other nations, which commanders from both nations described as a bid to increase interoperability and improve deterrence in the region. The annual "Super Garuda Shield" drills will take place in the capital Jakarta and several locations on the western island of Sumatra and the Riau archipelago. The drills will involve land, air, and maritime components, including staff exercises, cyber defense drills, and a live-fire event that will bring the 11-day exercise to a close on September 4. This year, more than 4,100 Indonesian and 1,300 American troops are taking part, making this year's Super Garuda Shield the "largest ever."

*The large-scale multi nation and multi-platform domain exercise reflects a broader multilateral effort to enhance collective security and interoperability among Indo-Pacific militaries. The choice of locations – Jakarta, Sumatra, and the Riau archipelago – further suggests strategic positioning near key maritime routes and contested waters.*

### Other Developments

[The toxic nationalism of the Thai-Cambodia border crisis](#)

[Thai court dismisses Thaksin case, finds 'no evidence' of royal insult](#)

[Meeting on FMR, Myanmar border fencing inconclusive](#)



## East Asia

by

Arshiya Chaturvedi

On August 24, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi met the ROK President's [Special Envoy](#) Park Byeong-seug in Beijing. Minister Wang Yi, while noting the successful completion of 33 years of China-ROK diplomatic ties, emphasised that their relationship now stands at a crucial stage of improvement and development, which has guided the two leaders to advance this strategic cooperative partnership. Mr Yi remarked that the China-ROK partnership has shown the importance of maintaining friendship and expanding cooperation while carefully treading on contentious issues to promote long-term stability. The Foreign Minister also called for upholding multilateralism, opposing protectionism, and addressing regional and global challenges. Mr Park handed over ROK President Lee's letter to Chinese President Xi and reaffirmed the ROK's commitment to the one-China principle. He also expressed the ROK's readiness to enhance high-level exchanges, deepen practical and cultural cooperation, and work with China to maintain regional peace, stability, and prosperity.

*ROK has a heavy trade dependency on China, being its largest trading partner. This reliance is what influences Seoul's generally cordial geopolitical stance toward Beijing, well reflected in its firm support for the One-China policy. China-ROK relations are further expected to grow in the wake of US President Trump's tariff measures, imposing a broader 15 per cent duty on South Korean imports.*

On August 22, India's Ministry of External Affairs announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will [visit Japan](#) from August 29-30. Media sources report Japan is planning to double its private-sector investment in India to [10 trillion yen](#) (\$68 billion) over the next decade, with the announcement of the target expected during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Tokyo visit. Also suggested is that the two nations will also revise their 17-year-old joint security declaration to address current challenges and launch a new Economic Security Initiative to ensure stable supplies of critical materials and safeguard key infrastructure. Its new investment plan will prioritise investments in semiconductors, critical minerals, telecommunications, clean energy, pharmaceuticals, and advanced fields like AI.

*The US's imposition of tariffs and protectionist trade measures, along with growing apprehensions over China's security posture, are providing a "natural thrust" for India and Japan to deepen cooperation in broad-ranging areas, including investment, trade, infrastructure development, and security collaboration.*

South Korean President Lee Jae-myung visited Japan for his [first overseas trip](#), over the US, signalling a major shift in Seoul's foreign policy approach and its relationship with Tokyo. During this landmark summit, the two countries also issued their first joint statement in 17 years, pledging cooperation on AI, trade, denuclearisation, and demographic challenges. While the two countries share a strained colonial legacy and Lee has even himself previously criticised engagement with Tokyo, since taking office, he has adopted a rather pragmatic approach and even called Japan an indispensable partner.

*President Trump's unpredictable trade policies and security commitments are shaking the trust of Washington's allies. The growing complication in the strategic relationship with the US is prompting Japan and South Korea to diversify and seek greater certainty by strengthening ties with each other and reaching out to other global partners.*

## Other Developments

[Lee heads to Washington for key summit with Trump](#)

[Russia deploys SU-57 near US base off Japan? Images purport to show stealth aircraft](#)

[Kim Jong Un oversees launch of two new air defence missiles: state media](#)

[Taiwan records 6 PLA aircraft, 7 PLAN vessels around its territory](#)

[After India and Europe, Taiwan's national postal service suspends mail operations to US. Here's why](#)

[Trump wants to meet North Korea's Kim this year, he tells South Korea](#)



## West Asia

by

Sanket Joshi

Following a meeting with Lebanon's President Joseph Aoun in Beirut, US Envoy Thomas Barrack informed that the Lebanese government would present a plan to [disarm the militant group Hezbollah](#) on August 31. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu welcomed Lebanon's intent to disarm Hezbollah, stressing that should Beirut disarm Hezbollah, Israel will take reciprocal measures, including a phased [withdrawal from southern Lebanon](#). Iran-backed [Hezbollah rejected any proposal for disarmament](#), asserting that the group opposes any “direct cooperation with the Zionist [Israel] enemy or collusion against Lebanon’s people and its resistance”.

*The Lebanese government's plan to disarm Hezbollah is another major blow to Iran's “axis of resistance” (Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Houthis) against the US and Israel.*

Amidst stalled nuclear negotiations and the US and Israel's military strikes on Iran's nuclear sites, Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, asserted that the [current situation is “unsolvable”](#) and that Iran will not obey orders from Washington. Meanwhile, on August 26, Iran and the E3 (France, the UK, and Germany) held talks on the [UN's snapback sanctions mechanism](#) as part of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) of 2015. Tehran warned that the E3 did not have the legal right to enforce snapback sanctions, while the E3 emphasised the importance of Iran allowing nuclear inspections to avoid sanctions.

*Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's statement that the current situation between the US and Iran is “unsolvable” demonstrates widening differences and a lack of strategic trust between the two countries.*

While several Western countries have announced their intent to recognise the Palestinian State at the UN General Assembly in September 2025, German Chancellor Friedrich Merz announced on August 26 that [Germany will not recognise Palestine](#). Germany is not considering formal recognition of a Palestinian state, as certain conditions have not been met.

*The plans by France, Britain, and Australia to formally recognise Palestine at the UNGA, while the US, Israel, and Germany's refusal to do so, represent a disunity in the West on a “two-state solution” to the Israel-Palestine conflict.*

## Other Developments

[Australia expels Iranian ambassador after spy agency finds Iran directed antisemitic attacks on its soil](#)

[Smotrich rejoices as settlement plan that 'erases 2-state delusion' gets final greenlight](#)

[Gaza City officially in famine, with hunger spreading, says global hunger monitor](#)

## Central Asia

by

Jayantika Rao T.V.

King of Jordan Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein paid an [official visit to Kazakhstan](#), on August 26–27. The visit marked a new stage in strengthening political dialogue and expanding strategic cooperation between the two nations. The talks addressed issues of regional and international security, including efforts to stabilise the Middle East, as well as enhanced coordination within international organisations. Both leaders aim to further institutionalise political dialogue and create mechanisms for long-term cooperation. [Projects under discussion](#) span agriculture, pharmaceuticals, digitalization, education, and energy.

*The visit highlighted Central Asia's growing strategic significance as a nexus for investment and regional connectivity. Simultaneously, it underscores Kazakhstan's commitment to its multi-vector foreign policy, demonstrated through its efforts to broaden diplomatic and economic partnerships.*

On [August 22](#), Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan have pledged to increase cooperation in energy, transport, and logistics in a joint declaration. The leaders - Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, and Chairman of People's Council of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow signed the declaration following a trilateral summit held in the Turkmen resort town of Awaza. The agreement established a joint working group to discuss issues related to transport and communication infrastructure development, as well as to coordinate transportation and simplify the conditions for its organization. During the meeting, Uzbek President Mirziyoyev stressed the three countries should “fully utilise the huge transit potential” of their geography. “The connection of existing and promising corridors will allow the formation of a stable and efficient transcontinental route connecting China with South Asia, the Middle East and Europe through the territories of our countries,”

*The agreement underscores the collective commitment of Central Asian nations to enhance regional cooperation aimed at fostering peace, mutual trust, and understanding. It further reflects their strategic intent to assume a more prominent and proactive role in global affairs.*

### Other Developments

[President Tokayev to Pay Official Visit to China This Week](#)

[Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic Bring Strategic Cooperation to New Level](#)

[Military from Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan arrive in Belarus for CSTO joint exercises](#)

## Indian Ocean Region

by

Divya Rai

The Indian Navy [commissioned](#) two advanced multi-mission stealth frigates, INS Udaygiri and INS Himgiri, at Naval Base Visakhapatnam on August 26, in the presence of Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh. Both frigates follow INS Nilgiri, the lead ship of the successor class to Project 17 (Shivalik class), featuring enhanced stealth, advanced sensors and weapons, Combined Diesel or Gas propulsion, and Integrated Platform Management Systems. INS Udaygiri and INS Himgiri are the 100th and 101st warships designed in-house by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau, with indigenous content exceeding 75%, involving numerous MSMEs and Indian OEMs. The two frigates will join the Eastern Fleet, enhancing India's ability to secure sea lanes and respond rapidly to maritime contingencies.

*The commissioning symbolizes a major milestone in India's journey toward defence self-reliance under Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiatives, boosting India's maritime security and affirms the Indian Navy's evolving blue-water capability and strategic posture amid growing regional security challenges.*

The 6th High-Level Meeting (HLM) between the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Vietnam Coast Guard (VCG) [took place](#) in Hanoi, Vietnam, on August 20, 2025, under the framework of the 2015 Memorandum of Understanding on Coast Guard Cooperation. Discussions focused on enhancing collaboration in Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), Maritime Law Enforcement, Marine Pollution Response, and Capacity Building, with particular emphasis on addressing transnational maritime crimes such as smuggling, trafficking, and illegal fishing. The meeting was co-chaired by Additional Director General ICG Anand Prakash Badola and Vice Commandant VCG Major General Vu Trung Kien. Both sides reviewed recent ship visits and professional exchanges, agreeing to continue joint initiatives aimed at strengthening interoperability.

*India and Vietnam have strengthened ties through professional exchanges, joint training, ship visits, and collaborative law enforcement efforts in the maritime domain. Their coast guard cooperation aligns with regional security goals to counter transnational maritime crimes, enhance search and rescue capabilities, and respond jointly to marine pollution incidents.*

## Other Developments

[The Indian Navy will be hosting the 'Emerging Leaders Panel Discussion' under the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium \(IONS\) from August 27 to 28, 2025](#)

[Indian Naval Ship INS \*Kadmatt\* successfully completed a three-day port call at Surabaya, Indonesia](#)

[INS Tamal arrived at Souda Bay, Greece, on August 19, 2025, during her return passage to India post commissioning in Russia](#)



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